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National Champions! RWU Sails into First Place at Team Nationals

Hawks overcome Georgetown, Boston College to secure the first team national championship in Roger Williams University history



June 8, 2011

BRISTOL, R.I. – The Roger Williams University sailing team took home its first team racing national championship in school history on May 29, overcoming 13 other top collegiate teams to win the Walter C. Wood Memorial Trophy. Held in Oregon’s Columbia River Gorge, the three-day competition was the University’s first appearance at the APS/ICSA Team Race National Championship.



“We’ve never even qualified for this national race before,” says Amanda Callahan, head coach of the Roger Williams sailing team. “So to have that pressure of new competition and to still come through and win was just amazing!”

The collegiate competitors arrived at the sailing venue to a steady 15-knot breeze and a cool 45 degrees. It was a close and exciting regatta down to the end as the winds continued to gust in the 20-knot range and each team fought to move on. Alongside the Roger Williams squad, Georgetown University, Boston College and the College of Charleston secured spots in the competition’s Final Four. The Hawks sailed well through the weekend, until Sunday morning when they lost the first races of the day. At that point, they knew they had to win all three races in the Final Four to win the championship.

“The break in the middle of the day [between the Gold Round and the Final Four] gave us a chance to get focused,” Callahan says. “Once they hit the water, they knew what the job was and they went out and did it. It couldn’t have been a more nail-biting, exciting regatta.”

The Hawks tied Boston College going into the last race of the Final Four. BC was ahead at the start of the race, and the pairings kept changing all over the course. By the leeward mark, Boston College was spinning a penalty turn and Roger Williams advanced up the beat to win the race, finishing with a first and second combination. The team’s focus helped them stay in the race and win the event.

“Not only did everything came down to the last race, but we were pitted against BC – one of the best teams in collegiate sailing,” says Cy Thompson ’11. “To have that storybook ending where it was just us against them in the final and to pull off the win – you couldn’t have written it any better.”

Boston College placed second in the competition, with the College of Charleston and Georgetown University rounding out third and fourth places, respectively. The Columbia Gorge Racing Association and the Northwest ICSA served as regatta hosts.

In addition to the national championship, three Hawks team members – Alec Anderson ’13, Kelly Stannard ’12 and Cy Thompson ’11 – were named to the ICSA All-American team. Chosen by a committee of coaches who represent the seven conferences in the ICSA, the All-Americans are selected based on their competitive record in district and North American Championships. This was Stannard’s second straight year receiving the honor and the third for Thompson, making him the only three-time ICSA All-American in RWU sailing history.

Roger Williams University joins an elite list of schools that have previously won the national team race title including St. Mary's College of Maryland, Boston College and Georgetown University.

Sailing for the Hawks were skippers Cy Thompson ’11 (St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands), Alec Anderson ’13 (Tortola, BVI), Sean Bouchard ’12 (Bermuda) with crews: Kelly Stannard ’12 (Salem, Conn.), Sophie Bellacosa ’13 (Winchester, Mass.), Bianca Rom ’13 (Amityville, N.Y.), Tyler Wilson ’12 (Woodville, Mass.), Cameron Pimentel ’13 (Paget, Bermuda), Joshua Saltmarsh ’11 (Wayland, Mass.), Haley Powell ’13 (St. George, Bermuda), and Alyssa Seifert ’13 (Duxbury, Mass.).

To watch a video of Hawk’s final victory over Boston College, [visit Sailgroove here](#).

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